

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 03266 130816Z

16

ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9552

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 3266

NODIS

FOR SECRETARY FROM BROWN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJ: PHASE ONE AND A HALF

1. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT A SYRIAN POLITICAL INITIATIVE, WHICH WE MORE OR LESS SUPPORT, CONTRASTING IT WITH SYRIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION, AGAINST WHICH WE HAVE WARNED, IT IS APPARENT THAT MIDDLE GROUND EXISTS BETWEEN THE TWO CONCEPTS AND THAT THAT IS WHERE WE ARE IN FACT AT PRESENT. CALL IT PHASE ONE AND A HALF, OR WHAT YOU WILL, WE ARE NOW RPT NOW FACING A SYRIAN POLITICAL INITIATIVE BACKED UP BY ENOUGH SYRIAN CONTROLLED TROOPS TO BE CONSIDERED AT LEAST HALF WAY TO OUTRIGHT MILITARY INTERVENTION.

2. THE BUILD UP HAS BEEN GRADUAL, BUT THERE IS NO LONGER ANY DOUBT ABOUT IT, AND IF LEBANON'S NEIGHBOR TO THE EAST HAS NOT OVERLY DISTURBED LEBANON'S NEIGHBOR TO THE SOUTH THE SAME CANNOT BE SAID ABOUT LEBANESE LEFT AND THE PALESTINIANS. THESE GROUPS, FIRST INFORMED THAT THERE WAS NO SIGNIFICANT BUILD UP, ARE NOW FACED WITH A FAIT ACCOMPLI, SOFTENED ONLY BY THE ALLEGED ASSURANCE (OBVIOUSLY FALSE) THAT THE INTERVENTION IS DESIGNED TO STRENGTHEN THE POSITION OF THE LEFT. ASSAD'S TOUGH SPEECH DRIVES FOR FAST THOUGHT THAT THE SYRIANS WILL NOT LET ARAFAT OR JUMBLATT OBSTRUCT SYRIAN ACTIONS.

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